Review of: "Project-Based Learning for Graduate Students in Digital Humanities"

Ioana Galleron

This is a very descriptive paper about a program implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) for developing skills in digital humanities amongst MA and doctoral students in Arts and Humanities at New York University. PBL is presented as an alternative to summer schools and other short introductory programs to computer assisted humanistic research. The main conclusions are that such an approach helps students to better develop digital and professional skills, because of higher motivational levels and better adapted topics to their scholarly profiles. Also, small group interactions and one-to-one meetings must have played a role in the general feeling that students made considerable progress (there is no measure of the progress actually described).

What one might miss in reading this captivating narrative is a more specific focus on a research question, or problem to solve. Following the suggestion in the previous paragraph, I would have been interested in a contrast study between skills developed by participants to a summer school (or other form of short, intensive learning of DH methods and tools), and those developed within the program. Another area of interest would have been a discussion about how project-based learning can be fully integrated in regular curricula. There are several experiments in this regard in European universities, and they put to the fore organizational and pedagogical difficulties, on the solving of which it would have been interesting to hear what the authors have to say.

I also join the suggestion made by a previous reviewer about the interest to include a reflection about the collaboration between SSH and STEM trainers: did this program lead to increased cooperation between university staff?

All in all, I recommend this paper to scholars or staff who have never experimented with PBL, and need a detailed explanation what it takes and how it works.